

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 OPR-02 CU-04 DRC-01 /128 W

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R 280815Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8957

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC/POLAD

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ID

SUBJECT: ANTI-MARRIAGE BILL DISTURBANCE

REF: JAKARTA 11537

SUMMARY: OFFICIAL REACTION TO PROTEST AGAINST
MARRIAGE BILL WHICH DISRUPTED PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY
MILD THUS FAR, WITH SOME DEMONSTRATORS REPORTEDLY
DETAINED BUT PROBABLY NOT FOR LONG. ALTHOUGH
RECENT GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS HAVE HELD DOOR OPEN
TO POSSIBILITY OF "IMPROVEMENTS" IN BILL,
PROSPECTS FOR REAL AS OPPOSED TO COSMETIC COMPROMISE SEEM
SLIGHT. END SUMMARY.

1. OFFICIAL REACTION TO SEPTEMBER 27 DEMONSTRATION
IN PARLIAMENT AGAINST MARRIAGE BILL MILD THUS FAR.
JAKARTA GARRISON COMMANDER BRIG GEN MANTIK
TOLD PRESS INCIDENT WAS A "COMMOTION" (RIBUT-RIBUT)
NOT A DEMONSTRATION. ASKED HOW 500 OBVIOUS
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POTENTIAL COMMOTION-MAKERS MANAGED TO ENTER PARLIAMENT

BUILDING IN FIRST PLACE, MANTIK CHOSE TO IGNORE
INFERENCE THAT SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS LESS THAN
100 PERCENT SATISFACTORY AND OBSERVED THAT INCIDENT PROVED
INDONESIAN SOCIETY IN NEED OF DISCIPLINE. (IN ACT
SESSION RESUMED AFTER BEING HELDUP FOR OVER TWO
HOURS, ALTHOUGH BY THEN MOST MP'S HAD DEPARTED.)

2. PRESS COVERAGE OF INCIDENT HEAVY, INCLUDING
MANY PHOTOS FEATURING GIRL STUDENTS IN WHITE
ISLAMIC GARB WAVING ANTI-MARRIAGE BILL SLOGANS
ON BALCONY OF PARLIAMENT AND LATER BEING DISPERSED
ON STREET BY TRUNCHEON-CARRYING POLICE. ACCORDING
PRESS, YOUTHS WHO PRESENTED VIEWS TO PARLIAMENTARY
LEADERSHIP SAID THEY WOULD NOT LEAVE PREMISES
UNTIL THREE COLLEAGUES PICKED UP EARLIER BY
POLICE WERE RELEASED. PRESS HAS REPORTED THAT
ABOUT A DOZEN MORE DETAINED FOLLOWING YESTERDAY'S
INCIDENT (HOWEVER IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THEY WILL
BE HELD LONG).

3. IN TYPICAL EDITORIAL REACTION INDEPENDENT
SOCIALIST PEDOMAN OBSERVED THAT TEENAGE DEMONSTRATORS
PROBABLY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND COMPLEXITIES OF MARRIAGE BILL
ISSUE BUT NOTED THEY WERE EXPRESSING HEARTFELT, WIDELY-HELD
SENTIMENTS AND PRAISED RECENT GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS
HOLDING DOOR OPEN TO COMPROMISE (SEE BELOW).

4. IRONICALLY ENOUGH, SPEECH BY MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS
AFFAIRS MUKTI ALI, WHICH WAS DISRUPTED, WAS AMONG
THE MORE DIPLOMATIC AND SENSIBLE STATEMENTS
AUTHORITIES HAVE YET MADE ON THIS SUBJECT. MUKTI
SAID GOVERNMENT WOULD WELCOME "WITH OPEN ARMS"
IMPROVEMENTS SUGGESTED BY PARLIAMENT, AND REITERATED
THAT IT WAS NOT GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO VIOLATE
RELIGIOUS NORMS OR IDEALS. HE REASSERTED THAT
REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY BILL WOULD NOT PREVENT
MOSLEMS FROM ADHERING TO ISLAMIC LAW, AND DENIED
ALLEGATIONS THAT PROVISION SPECIFICALLY ALLOWING
INTERFAITH MARRIAGES IS INTENDED TO ENCOURAGE THEM
(OR AS EXTREME CRITICS WOULD HAVE IT, PROMOTE
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"CREEPING CHRISTIANITY").

5. COMMENT: MUKTI'S STATEMENT FOLLOWS PRESS
REPORTS OF MEETING BETWEEN RELIGIOUS ADVISORS TO ISLAMIC
UNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTY (PPP) AND PRESIDENT
SUHARTO SEPTEMBER 26. ACCORDING PRESS, ADVISORS SAID
PRESIDENT HAD ASSURED THEM BILL "COULD BE DISCUSSED".
ALTHOUGH THESE STATEMENTS IMPLY WILLINGNESS TO

COMPROMISE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT GOVERNMENT WILL YIELD
ON BASIC GOAL OF PASSING CIVIL MARRIAGE LAW APPLICABLE
TO ALL INDONESIANS, OR THAT MOSLEMS (WHOSE
EMOTIONS ARE NOW THOROUGHLY AROUSED) WILL
CEASE TO PROTEST ANY BILL THAT DOES NOT
SPECIFICALLY ENDORSE ISLAMIC MARRIAGE LAW FOR
MOSLEMS. IN THAT, AT THIS LATE DATE, REAL
COMPROMISE, WHILE NOT IMPOSSIBLE
IS NOT LIKELY.
GALBRAITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, PRESS COMMENTS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, SOCIAL CUSTOMS, MARRIAGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973JAKART11583
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973094/aaaaacnc.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: JAKARTA 11537
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26-Nov-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <17-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANTI-MARRIAGE BILL DISTURBANCE
TAGS: PINT, ID
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005